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Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 510
INFO AMEMBASSY BELGRADE
AMEMBASSY BERLIN
AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST
AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST
AMCONSUL LENINGRAD
AMCONSUL MUNICH
AMEMBASSY PRAGUE
AMEMBASSY SOFIA
AMEMBASSY WARSAW

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PFOR, PINT, UR
SUBJECT: TWENTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF 20TH CPSU CONGRESS

REF: MOSCOW 2728

1. SUMMARY. THE TWENTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF THE 20TH PARTY CONGRESS WAS MENTIONED BRIEFLY IN BREZHNEV'S CC REPORT TO THE 25TH CONGRESS AND NOTED IN A FEBRUARY 14 PRAVDA EDOTIRIAL. IT HAS TO OUR KNOWLEDGE RECEIVED NO OTHER MEDIA COVERAGE. ONE CAN FIND MENTION OF THE 20TH CONGRESS, THE PERSONALITY CULT, AND STALIN IN RECENTLY PUBLISHED SOVIET TEXTS AND REFERENCE BOOKS, HOWEVER. END SUMMARY.

2. THE TWENTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF THE 20TH CONGRESS (FEBRUARY 14-

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25, 1956) HAS THUS FAR RECEIVED MINIMAL ATTENTION. BREZHNEV

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MENTIONED THE ANNIVERSARY BRIEFLY IN HIS CC REPORT TO THE
25TH CONGRESS FEBRUARY 24. WHILE DISCUSSING INNER-
PARTY LIFE AND DEMOCRATIC CENTRALISM, HE SAID THAT IN
THIS REGARD, "THE DECISIONS OF THE 20TH CONGRESS OF THE
PARTY, WHICH HAS REACHED ITS TWENTIETH ANNIVERSARY, HAD
GREAT SIGNIFICANCE." BREZHNEV DID NOT MENTION "THE CULT
OF PERSONALITY," NOR DID HE MENTION THE TERM "SUBJECTIVISIM"
USUALLY ASSOCIATED WITH KHRUSHCHEV.

3. THE ONLY OTHER RECENT MENTION OF THE 20TH CONGRESS
WE HAVE SEEN WAS IN THE PRAVDA EDITORIAL OF FEBRUARY 14,
ENTITLED "THE CONSISTENT LENINIST COURSE." THE EDITORIAL
NOTED THE OPENING OF THE 20TH CONGRESS TWENTY YEARS AGO
AND SAID THAT IT "DIRECTED PRINCIPLED CRITICISM AGAINST
MANIFESTATIONS OF THE CULT OF PERSONALITY AND THE VIOLATIONS,
STEMMING FROM THE CULT, OF NORMS OF PARTY LIFE, PRINCIPLES OF
PARTY LEADERSHIP AND REVOLUTIONARY LEGALITY." THE EDITORIAL
IMMEDIATELY WENT ON TO NOTE THAT THE PARTY ALSO ELIMINATED
SUBJECTIVISM AND VOLUNTARISM, AND THAT THE OCTOBER 1964 CC PLENUM
PLAYED A GREAT ROLE IN THIS. NEITHER STALIN NOR KHRUSHCHEV
WAS NAMED.

4. THE AUTHORITATIVE ALEKSANDROV ARTICLE ON HUMAN RIGHTS
(REPORTED 2728 SEPTEL) IN PRAVDA FEBRUARY 20 CAME CLOSE TO
CITING THE 20TH CONGRESS WHEN IT NOTED THAT THE CONSEQUENCES OF
THE PERSONALITY CULT HAD BEEN OVERCOME AND THE CPSU, AFTER
ADOPTING "MOST DECISIVE MEASURES, ERADICATED THE VIOLATIONS
OF LEGALITY WHICH HAD TAKEN PLACE."

5. ONE CAN, HOWEVER, FIND PASSAGES ON THE 20TH
CONGRESS AND THER PERSONALITY CULT OF STALIN IN
RECENTLY PUBLISHED TEXTBOOKS AND REFERENCE WORKS.
FOR EXAMPLE:

--THE ENTRY "CULT OF PERSONALITY" IN THE
"DICTIONARY OF SCIENTIFIC COMMUNISM" (2ND EDITION,
EDITED BY A.M. RUMYANSTEV, SIGNED TO PRESS IN
SEPTEMBER 1975) CONTAINS A LENGTHY PARAGRAPH ON
STALIN, WHO RENDERED "GREAT SERVICES IN CONSTRUCTING
SOCIALISM IN THE USSR AND IN THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNIST
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AND WORKERS' MOVEMENT" BUT WHO DEPARTED FROM THE LENINIST
PRINCIPLE OF COLLECTIVE LEADERSHIP AND WAS JUSTLY CONDEMNED
FOR THIS AT THE 20TH CONGRESS.

-- THE ENTRY "CRITICISM AND SELF-CRITICISM" IN
THIS DICTIONARY SPEAKS OF "THE COURAGEOUS AND OPEN ANNOUNCE-
MENT OF THE PARTY REGARDING THE HEAVY CONSEQUENCES, THE
SERIOUS MISTAKES AND DISTORTIONS COMMITTED BECAUSE OF THE

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CULT OF PERSONALITY OF STALIN. THE PARTY'S ANNOUNCEMENT
OPENED THE WAY FOR OVERCOMING THESE CONSEQUENCES IN ALL
SPHERES OF PUBLIC LIFE AND INCREASED THE ROLE AND
AUTHORITY OF THE CPSU."

-- THE SAME ITEM CONTINUES WITH AN INDIRECT REFERENCE
TO KHRUSHCHEV'S LEADERSHIP ERRORS: "MANY SHORTCOMINGS
IN THE MANAGEMENT OF THE ECONOMY AND THE STYLE AND METHODS
OF PARTY WORK WERE ELIMINATED THANKS TO THE
PRINCIPLED, CRITICAL APPROACH TOWARD MATTERS THAT
WAS MANIFEST BY THE OCTOBER 1964 CC PLENUM AND BY
SUBSEQUENT PLENUMS."

-- THE LATEST EDITION OF THE "DICTIONARY
OF PHILOSOPHY" (EDITED BY M. M. ROZENTAL', SIGNED TO
PRESS IN JULY 1975) CONTAINS AN ENTRY FOR "CULT OF PERSON-
ALITY" WHICH CRITICIZES CULT OF PERSONALITY OF STALIN AND
PRAISES THE 20TH CONGRESS IN A LONG QUOTATION FROM THE THESES
OF THE CC ISSUED ON THE OCCASION OF THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF
THE OCTOBER REVOLUTION.

-- THE LATEST EDITION OF THE BASIC PHILOSOPHY TEXT
"THE FOUNDATIONS OF MARXIST-LENINIST PHILOSOPHY" (THIRD
EDITION, EDITED BY F. V. KONSTANTINOV, SIGNED TO PRESS IN
NOV
N-4 $1,JVO R JTAINS A LENGTHY PASSAGE ON THE CULT OF
PERSONALITY OF STALIN (BUT DOES NOT SPECIFICALLY MENTION THE
20 TH CONGRESS IN THIS CONTEXT).

6. COMMENT: WE THINK THAT THE PRIMARY REASON THE ANNIVERSARY
OF THE 20TH CONGRESS HAS RECEIVED SUCH LITTLE NOTICE IS
THAT THE ANNIVERSARY HAPPENED TO COINCIDE WITH THE PERIOD OF
THE 25TH CONGRESS, WHERE THE EMPHASIS HAS BEEN ON BREZHNEV
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AND "HIS" TWO CONGRESSES, THE 23RD AND 24TH. IN ANY CASE,
THE ISSUES OF STALINISM, THE CULT OF PERSONALITY, AND
THE 20TH CONGRESS ARE KEY INDICATORS OF SOVIET POLITICAL
DEVELOPMENTS AND ATTITUDES AND REMAIN THORNY PROBLEMS FOR
THE PRESENT LEADERSHIP, ALL OF WHOM ACHIEVED EMINENCE
UNDER STALIN AND KHRUSHCHEV. WE WOULD APPRECIATE
KNOWING IF THE ANNIVERSARY OF THE 20TH CONGRESS HAS
BEEN MENTIONED IN THE MEDIA OF OTHER COUNTRIES OF THE
"SOCIALIST CAMP."

STOESSEL

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